POTATO STOCKS

Crop Reporting Board

Economics, Statistics, & Cooperatives Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture

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MAY POTATO STOCKS

An estimated 60.8 million cwt. of potatoes for all uses were in storage in the fall producing States on May 1, 1979. This reflects the largest monthly disappearance since the beginning of the storage season primarily because of the increased processing activity and a large volume of seed deliveries. This report is the first May 1 stocks estimate issued by the Crop Reporting Board. Consequently, comparisons with May 1 stocks levels of prior years are not possible.

The regional breakdown is as follows: the seven Eastern States have 5.68 million cwt. in storage and the eight Central States' holdings totaled 8.58 million cwt., about half the April 1 levels for both regions. In the eight Western States, there were 46.5 million cwt. in storage on May 1, about two-thirds of the April 1 stocks, with the bulk of these held in Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

Disappearance of the 1978 fall crop to May 1, 1979 was 253 million cwt. (excluding Nevada). This includes potatoes diverted to May 1, 1979 under the USDA's potato diversion program. The total disappearance included 31.0 million cwt. of potatoes that were dumped during grading, fed to livestock on potato farms, discarded without grading and lost due to shrinkage (moisture loss).

The quantity of potatoes processed to May 1, 1979 in the seven major States amounted to 91.0 million cwt.. A total of 12.7 million cwt. were processed during April, the largest monthly total since the stocks estimating season began last December 1. This reflects the increased processing activity in the West.

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NOTE: Stocks are defined as the quantity remaining in storage for all purposes and uses, including shrinkage and waste and other losses that occur after the date of each report. Sales of fall potatoes for all purposes generally account for about 90 percent of the total fall production. Shrinkage and loss and home use account for the remaining 10 percent.

TABLE 1. FALL POTATOES: PRODUCTION; AND DECEMBER 1, JANUARY 1, FEBRUARY 1, MARCH 1, APRIL 1, AND MAY 1 TOTAL STOCKS, CROPS OF 1968-78 IN THE FALL STATES

CROP YEAR	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS FOLLOWING YEAR					
		DEC 1	JAN 1	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 1	MAY 1
	1,000 CWT						
1968	234,832	152,810	130,350	104,995	81,940		
1969	252,561	162,800	138,140	111,510	87,620		
1970	267,827	175,145	150,030	122,230	96,780		
1971 1/	266,707	176,390	151,435	124,375	98,485		
1972	249,320	158,565	134,420	107,310	83,380	58,250	
1973	254,379	157,837	133,665	106,615	81,165	55,870	
1974	289,342	187,935	163,095	133,425	104,116	75,905	
1975	278,391	185,965	159,140	131,685	104,050	71,640	
1976	307,427	201,980	174,775	143,925	114,140	81,875	
1977	307,064	206,690	178,205	149,690	120,970	89,215	
1978	318,702	218,685	190,480	159,141	128,524	95,263	60,751

1/ BEGINNING WITH 1971, LATE SUMMER PRODUCTION FOR N Y-L I, WIS AND WASH HAS BEEN CLASSIFIED AS FALL.

TABLE 2. POTATOES USED FOR PROCESSING 1/, SEVEN STATES, 1977 AND 1978 CROPS

STATE	STORAGE SEASON	TO DEC 1	TO JAN 1	TO FEB 1	TO MAR 1	TO APR 1	TO MAY 1	ENTIRE SEASON
		1,000 CWT						
IDAHO AND MALHEUR CO., OREG	1977-78	16,761	22,217	27,360	32,913	39,070		61,261
	1978-79	15,660	21,215	26,045	31,115	37,080	43,225	
MAINE 2/	1977-78	2,500	3,290	4,185	4,980	5,960		8,040
	1978-79	2,280	2,800	3,670	4,390	5,355	6,205	
WASH AND OTHER AREAS, OREG	1977-78	14,205	17,745	21,620	26,160	30,280		44,460
	1978-79	14,758	18,060	21,910	25,720	29,645	34,450	
OTHER STATES 3/	1977-78	3,380	4,255	5,405	6,230	7,385		9,855
	1978-79	2,625	3,520	4,420	5,290	6,255	7,155	
TOTAL	1977-78	36,846	47,507	58,570	70,283	82,695		123,616
	1978-79	35,323	45,595	56,045	66,515	78,335	91,035	

1/ TOTAL QUANTITY RECEIVED AND USED FOR PROCESSING REGARDLESS OF THE STATE IN WHICH THE POTATOES WERE PRODUCED. DOES NOT INCLUDE QUANTITIES USED FOR POTATO CHIPS IN MAINE, MICH OR MINN.
2/ INCLUDES MAINE GROWN POTATOES ONLY.
3/ MICH, MINN AND N DAK.

TABLE 3. POTATOES: PRODUCTION AND TOTAL STOCKS OF FALL POTATOES HELD BY GROWERS, PROCESSORS, AND LOCAL DEALERS ON MAY 1, 1979

STATE	CROP OF 1978		
	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS MAY 1, 1979	MAY 1 STOCKS AS % OF PRODUCTION
	1,000 CWT		PERCENT
CALIF	6,055	910	15
COLO	9,750	650	7
CONN	1/	1/	
IDAHO	96,980	29,500	30
IND	1/	1/	
MAINE	26,180	4,500	17
MASS	1/	1/	
MICH	8,670	1,400	16
MINN	14,910	2,700	18
MONT	2,088	200	10
NEBR	1,680	250	15
N Y-L I	6,175	80	1
-UPSTATE	6,500	300	5
N DAK	22,400	3,200	14
OHIO	1/	1/	
OREG	28,488	5,650	20
PA	6,250	750	12
R I	1/	1/	
S DAK	1,190	100	8
UTAH	1/	1/	
VT	1/	1/	
WASH	50,685	9,500	19
WIS	17,325	880	5
WYO	1/	1/	
OTHER STATES	7,936	181	2
23 STATE TOTAL 2/	313,262	60,751	19

1/ INCLUDED IN "OTHER STATES". 2/ EXCLUDING NEV FOR WHICH NO STOCKS ESTIMATES ARE MADE. NEV 1978 PRODUCTION 5,440,000 CWT.

POTATO STOCKS QUALITY SURVEY
MINNESOTA AND NORTH DAKOTA (RED RIVER VALLEY)

The potato stocks quality information contained in this report is based on a survey conducted by the Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service in the Red River Valley of North Dakota and Minnesota. Sample bags of potatoes selected on a random basis were placed in storage at harvest time. Reports have been issued each month during the 1978-79 storage season showing the cumulative average grade and weight loss for potatoes at the time of removal from storage. At the request of the Red River Valley Potato Growers Association, samples were selected only for processing potatoes.

Samples recovered before May 1, 1979 continue to indicate that the quality of white varieties both at harvest and after storage was higher than last season. For Russet varieties however, a reduction in quality was reflected both at harvest and after storage compared with final 1977-78 data. The decline in No. 1 grade (including B's) for white varieties while in storage was 12 points as of May 1, 1979 compared with a 14 point decline for the entire season last year. Russet samples removed from storage to date indicate a 15 point decline in No. 1's compared with a 16 point decline for the entire 1977-78 season.

The percent of white varieties graded as culls at harvest was 1 point below last year's final data, and storage culls, at 14 percent, were 3 points below last season. Samples recovered to date indicate that the percent of Russet culls at harvest was equal to last season but was 1 point higher for after storage potatoes. The total weight loss while in storage, as of May 1, 1979, was below the 1977-78 season total for both white and Russet varieties.

The cooperation of the many potato growers and storage operators who assisted on this project is greatly appreciated.

POTATO STOCKS QUALITY SURVEY, RED RIVER VALLEY, 1978-79
AVERAGE GRADE OF POTATOES

CROP	NO. 1 INCLUDING B'S		NO. 2		CULLS		NO. 1 B'S 1/		WEIGHT LOSS
	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	
	PERCENT								
	SAMPLES RECOVERED BEFORE MAY 1, 1979 2/								
WHITE	88	76	6	10	6	14	6	6	5
RUSSET	81	66	11	18	8	16	2	3	4
	ALL SAMPLES 1977-78 STORAGE SEASON-FINAL 2/								
WHITE	86	72	7	11	7	17	6	7	6
RUSSET	85	69	7	16	8	15	4	5	6

1/ NO. 1 B'S ARE POTATOES THAT MEET THE U.S. NO. 1 GRADE BUT DO NOT MEET MINIMUM SIZE STANDARDS FOR THE AREA: RED AND WHITE VARIETIES - 1 1/2-2 1/4 INCHES IN DIAMETER AND RUSSET VARIETIES - UNDER 2 INCHES IN DIAMETER OR LESS THAN 4 OUNCES.
2/ MATCHED SAMPLES, QUALITY AT HARVEST COMPARED WITH QUALITY AFTER STORAGE.